

Saturday Review

WILL DESTROY

Executive Registry
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EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM DR. SCOVILLE TO MR. AMORY

CPC

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We are now approaching the end of our third week and our work has settled down into a fairly normal pattern which is anything but relaxing. There are daily conference meetings from 3:00 PM to 6:30 or 7:00 PM, followed by Western staff meetings and paper preparation at night, with review and more meetings and preparations the following morning. On Saturdays we have had the dubious privilege of having the meetings in the morning instead of afternoon, but tomorrow for the first time there will be no conference.

As you have gathered, after the first two days politics have gone strictly out the window and we have stuck to technical subjects with the only political skirmishing occurring over wording of communiques. The acoustic problem was settled rather amiably and to our complete satisfaction. We had expected little trouble in the radioactivity section but ran into a real deadlock on the requirement for aircraft sampling. This is obviously a political problem so far as the Soviets are concerned and I must say they have been rather ineffective in providing data to support their position. Fedorov, on the other hand, is an adept spokesman and succeeds in muddying up the waters and squirming out of tight positions. He is a very impressive individual in many respects, but in this radioactivity section I have found that he has not been technically too smart in the material he has presented or in supplying answers. I believe we have backed them into a very tight corner technically on this subject and when the matter comes up for final resolution on Monday, I have a feeling they will try and back down gracefully and go along with aircraft sampling in some form. We have been very careful to have them realize no overflight is involved in order to ease the political situation, but even so they are very sensitive. By the time you receive this you will undoubtedly have seen the results of Fisk, et al, dinner with Fedorov. Also the complete memoranda for record coming back via this same pouch.

The seismic discussion has been on a much higher plane and in this case there has been a real scientific difference of opinion. For the first time, the Soviets have data, albeit HE data, to support their position. I believe that some resolution will occur, although at the moment it appears to me there is some legitimate excuse for a difference of opinion which unfortunately might be rather critical in designing a final system.

In general, the Soviet approach has been one of presenting theories, usually quite simple and then trying to make a fact fit the theory.

USAF review(s) completed.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

10/1/58

C O N F I D E N T I A L

The U.S. approach has been one of presenting the facts and frankly admitting that theories don't work for most of these complicated geophysical situations. Our reliance on data is the reason I believe that we have been successful in making the major technical points. They are very adept, however, at getting along with very little. They are also adept at using U.S. data to support their position instead of supplying any Soviet data on their own. I have a feeling that this is not entirely due to security on their part, but perhaps to the fact that they really do not have data available to support many of their points. Their openness in the seismic field is perhaps support for this thesis.

One of the most surprising items has been the apparent acceptance on the part of the Soviet Union of the concept of stations inside the country and even of mobile inspection teams. They have actually brought the subject up quite frequently, while we have been sitting back keeping a record for the time when this is the real topic of conversation.

I believe in general that our handling of the situation has gone quite well. ***. It is Fedorov who seems to be in the tight spots, although he should not be under-estimated. The Soviet delegation at the table is really quite weak with Semenov being the only other person who can really speak competently in these fields. Although Tamm is a very competent physicist, he apparently knows nothing about this field and is probably primarily there for dress purposes. They have some competent scientists in the back rows but I fear that our luminaries out-shine them rather badly.

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